

I'm sure you are being inundated with e-mail messages, and, well, you should be. Sinclair Broadcasting's decision to force their stations to air an anti-Kerry documentary days before the election should be investigated on several grounds. It smacks of illegal connection to a presidential campaign, and of illegal contributions, too. Furthermore, it is a clear example of the dangers of media consolidation.

I don't expect a Republican-appointed majority on the FCC to do much about it, just I did not expect a Republican-appointed majority on the Supreme Court to deal justly with the 2000 presidential vote debacle. You, however, should find my deep cynicism profoundly troubling. I am a middle-aged, middle-class, well-educated, white Southern male member of the clergy. I'm not an easy-to-dismiss leftist agitator. If I feel this way about the deep unfairness of so much of American politics -- the domination of corporate money and the unwillingness of

corporate-dominated
media to present
anything remotely
resembling "fair and
balanced" coverage
-- then the system
itself is in deep
trouble. You have a
responsibility not
only to those who
agree with you, but
also to the large
minority who do not.
You are failing your
calling.

Sinclair uses the
public airwaves free
of charge, and is
obligated by law to
serve the public
interest. But when
large companies
control the
airwaves, we get
more of what's good
for the bottom line
and less of what we
need for our
democracy. Instead
of something
produced at "News
Central" far away,
it's more important
that we see real
people from our own
communities and more
substantive news
about issues that
matter.

Sinclair's actions
show why we need to
strengthen media
ownership rules, not
weaken them. They
show why the license
renewal process
needs to involve
more than a returned
postcard. Thank you.